## I. HE Christmas dinner at Colonel Flowerdew's was a social success.

Flowerdew's was a social success. Irene Cleminshaw had never enjoyed herself better. She was new to the West Indies—the daughter of an officer just arrived in the Island—and the whole glamour of the scene was still fresh upon her. The open windows that gaze upon the creeper-covered veranda, the green light of the moon that shone through the big blossoms of the crimison bignonia, the cool air that blew in from the scented garden, the fireflies that flitted among the white hibiscus hushes without—all, all were so strange and fresh and beautiful. Then the profusion of tropleal flowers on the table itself; the noiseless brown walters, in their spotless white linen jackets, moving cat-like up and down; the huge heaps of oranges, pines and star apples; the negro women in the background handing in the dishes and showing their white teeth as

they passed them to the brown men servants.

It was like some magic scene of the "Arab'an Nights" to Irene's imagination. In her cool white muslin, with the sen breeze streaming in upon her and the moonlight flooding the careless garden beyond, she wondered why she had not always lived in the West

"Try some of our pepper-pot, Miss Cleminshaw," Colonel Flowerdew said, pressing it upon her. "Pepper-pot, you know, is a specialite here. We make it once, then go on adding to it always, without ever flushing it. My father told me that Monk Lewis praised this pepper-pot highly when he was here in 1820."

Irene helped herself to some, and found it not unpalatable. The historical dish was still as good as ever. "But it tastes quite fresh," she answered, roll-

ing it on her palate.

"No, no," the Colonel corrected gravely, twirling his white mustache. "That depends. It tastes modern, with occasional antique reminiscences. The heauty of pepper-pot is you never quite know what you're going to fish up out of it. You may happen on a piece that was put in yesterday, and you may happen on a piece that can remember Waterloo and was old before Trafalgar."

"It is certainly delicious," Irene interposed.
"Yes," the Colonel replied. "It's about the only
thing these confounded niggers can do that's worth

Irene glanced with a little sense of discomfort at the handsome young brown man in the white linen jacket who was carrying the dish. She thought it was unkind of the Colonel to speak of his race before him with such sweeping condemnation. But the brown man smiled imperturbably, and went on handing the pepper-pot. He was accustomed to such language. The Colonel noted her look, however, and burst out laughing. "My dear child." he cried. "you needn't trouble your head about these niegers' feelings, because—they haven't got any. They prefer being kicked. It suits them. They're just like a dog, don't you know. The harder you hit him the better he loves you. Give him a sound, good hiding and he crawls to your feet and fawns upon you. Well, your nigger's just like that. He's all the better for an occasional licking."

Irene was too polite to differ from her host, especially as she had only that week arrived from England; but she glanced again at the handsome young brown man. She felt sure he could not like to hear his mother's people so spoken of. Though she could not help admitting to herself that he seemed to take the remarks very quietly.

"We have a proverb here," the Colonel continued, sipping book like a connoisseur, "'God made the food, but the devil made the cooks'; and for my own part I improve upon it, 'The devil made the servants.' Here, Thomas, I say, the book to Miss Cleminshaw!"

Irene hardly knew what to answer. But the Colonel went on unperturbed. "They have one virtue, though; they serve you faithfully in great emergencies. They'll thieve and they'll play you tricks, and they'll laugh in their sleeve at you as long as things go all right; but when trouble's about, by George, they'll stick to you as a dog sticks to his master. They'll fight for you, and they'll die for you."
"That's the nature of the lower races", a clear, they have the stick to you are the stick to you are the stick to you are the stick to you."

"That's the nature of the lower races," a clergyman opposite her broke in. "A negro mammy will take more care of your bables than she would take of her own."

"Yes," the Colonel assented, "just as a dog is capable of deep attachment to his master's children, but utterly careless what becomes of his pupples."

Irene feit greatly embarrassed by this curious disregard of the black servants' feelings, and to turn the conversation she went on, "But they are so sweet, the dear little black bables! Such funny little brighteyed things! I'm quite in love with them. We saw several of them timbling about in the dust as we came up the Bog Walk. And what a lovely drive it is! I don't think I ever saw anything so beautiful as the bamboos and the tree ferns."

"Yes it's a pretty drive," the Colonel answered, caressing the white mustache once more; "but they keep it badly. You can't get these confounded niggers to keep anything as it ought to be kept. And as for the bables, well, they're fat enough, anyhow. I've seen half a dozen of them, black babies and black pigs, rolling in the dust outside a hut together, so that you couldn't tell which was which—black pig or black baby."

"They say your people here are discontented, Colonel," a young officer from Kingston put in, looking up the table toward their host. "Do you think there's anything in it?"

The Colonel laughed. "Discontented?" he cried. "Oh, well, they're always grumbling, of course, if that's what you mean; but discontented, not seriously. What have they got to be discontented about. I'd like to know? They have everything they want; plenty to eat and plenty to drink, and nothing to do but lie under the mango trees and wait till the mangoes drop into their mouths; so what can they find to grumble about? And they don't grumble, really, except just for the pleasure of it. It amuses them, grumbling. A more contented, good-natured, lazy, idle, happy-golucky set of blackguards than the negroes of this district I wouldn't wish to meet anywhere. Discontented? Not a bit of it; they wouldn't hurt a fly—God bless my soul, Walker, what's that blaze over yonder?"

yonder?"

Even as he spoke, a sudden flare of red lighted up the background. The Colonel rose from his seat at the head of the table. Thomas, the handsome brown boy in the clean white linen jacket, rushed over to the veranda. "Run, sah, run!" he cried, throwing up his hands. "Save yourself! We will look after de house and de property. Oh, my king, dem rish". It Gearge Macleod and his set! Dem burnin' de trash-houses!"

And from the side whence the glare came rose a loud discordant shout of triumph. "Arise, slay, burn! It de will ob de Lard! Kill, kill de Colonel! Kill, kill de Buccra!"

II

COLONEL FLOWERDEW at least had that saving grace of his kind, great physical courage. His cheek never blanched; his voice never faltered. He turned to his daughter. "Gwen," he sald, calmly, as he might have spoken on parade, "this is a bad business. Slink away by the back, dear, and try to get out on the North Road before they reach us. I will stop here and fight the ruffians with the men and the servants." Then he turned to Irene. "My child," he said, softly, "you must understand that this means real danger. The negroes have risen. If they catch you they will kill you—or worse than kill you. Hide in the river, and drown yourself rather than fall into

their hands." As he spoke he was drawing out and preparing his revolver. "If they take you alive, I dare not say what may happen to you." Irene shrank away into the back of the room

## A Christmas Cragedy in the Cropics

In a wild access of terror. What happened next she hardly knew. But she was dimly aware of smoke and flame redder. She saw the Colonel standing by the veranda, very resolute, with his revolver in his hand; she saw Thomas by his side with his cutlass, rapidly snatched up, and ready to defend with his life the master whose words she thought must so deeply have hurt him; she saw the other servants rushing forward, men and women alike, with knives, or whatever other weapon came handy; and beyond them all she saw advancing that wild band of insurgents, in coarse plantation clothes, with their inarticulate cries of "De Lard has risen! Hallelujah! Arise, slay, burn! Kill de Colone! Delibber de people!"

Gwen Flowerdew seized her arm. "Come away, Irene," she cried. "There's no time to lose. If they catch you they will kill you."
"You will not desert your father." Irene exclaimed, almost too terri-

fied to move.

"We must," Gwen answered. "The servants will protect him,"
As she spoke the words Gearge had leaped up on the veranda. The
Colonel raised his revolver and fired one shot, deliberately. But just as
the trigger moved Gearge flung up his hand and diverted the bullet.
Next instant, with a quick twist of the arm, he had wrested the pistol
from the Colonel's grasp and tossed it far among the bushes of the shrubbery. Thomas, rushing forward, brought down his cutlass on Gearge's
body; and the other servants closed in. Blood was spurting freely; there
was a clung of weapous. Irene closed her eyes and could look no longer.
With a common womanly impulse she clapped her hands to her ears and
stood rooted to the ground. Gwen selzed her by the arm and dragged
her off bodily. As they slunk out by the further door Irene opened her
eyes and looked back.

The last thing she saw was the Colonel's body, backed and bleeding; the white shirt front was dabbied and reddened with blood; above it the household servants were lighting like wildcats, while the insurgents were rushing on with uplifted cutiasses and uncarthly cries of "Kill, kill da Colonel!"

They were drunk with lust of blood and flushed with the sense of

Irene followed Gwen blindly into the canefield outside, and then, groping like one blind, to the thicket beyond. There her strength gave

"De Lard's will is done. We hab slain de tyrant!"

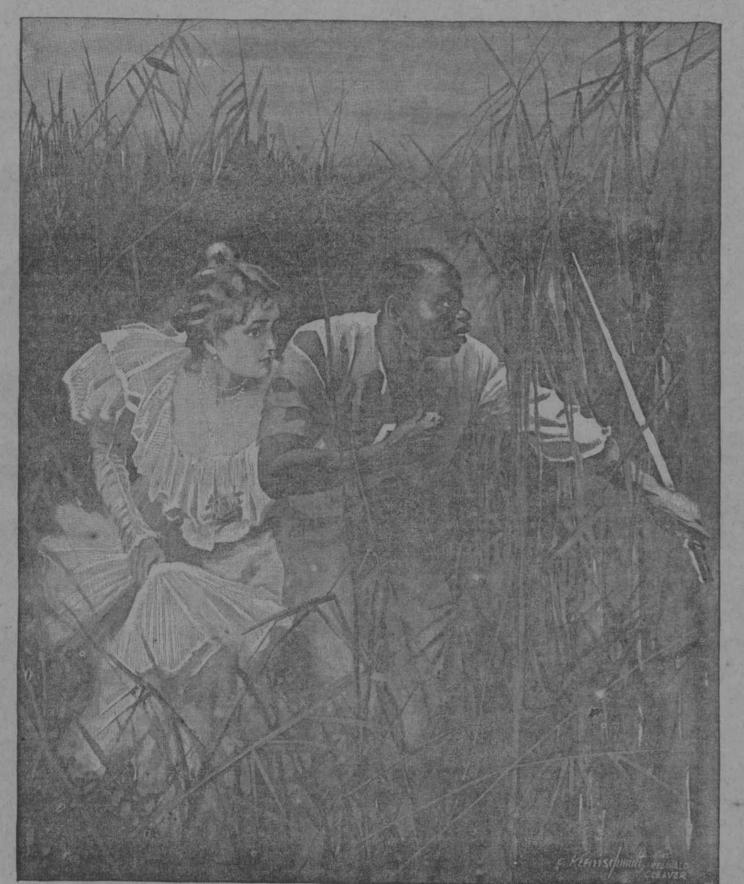
The eyes of Clemmy, the big negress, flashed rage. She fired the house with a brand from the cane brush. The wooden veranda and thatched roof biazed like tinder. The house servants, wounded and bleeding, still fought desperately among the flames, as the Colonel had predicted they would, for their master's property. But revolt was in the ascendant. More negroes had joined the little band of insurgents, roused by the flare of the burning roof and maddened by the sight of blood. It was clear that all was lost, for the moment at least. They could not lurk and wait for reinforcements from the loyal troops and people in Kingston.

4477 HERE is de missy?" Gearge cried, glancing round him for Gwen Flowerdew and counting 's slain. "She is wofse dan dem all. She too proud, da gal Gwen. " word ob de Lard came to me, 'Slay de white Jezebel that oppress — my Israel.' She go out de udder way. I see her slink away dere. Friends, breddern, join hands; scour de fields and plains until you come upon her an' slay her, de Lard's enemy, de woman ob de painted face, de Jezebel ob St. Tammas."

All the women had fled at once, leaving the handful of men to fight their battles. Now the house was carried, the insurgents rushed out with flerce shricks into the garden and the jungle beyond, which led down to the river. Obeying Gearge's orders, they joined hands in a long row, and began netting the space, as it were, in search of the fugitives. But they were not quite numerous enough to form an uninterrupted line, and at one of the gaps by the end Isaac Carvaiho found himself some six yards off from his nearest neighbor.

In a great straggling string they closed slowly in, sweeping the fugitives before them toward the banks of the Rio Cobre. Isaac strode on through the deep haulms of guines grass, up to his neck in lush mesdow, searching eagerly as he went for "de Lard's enemies." If he found one would draw his cutiass like a man and cut her throat. "Dem sneakin', cowardly, proud, good-for-nuffin' white women;" for his part he was determined—

He started aside even as he thought it, for close beside him, as quiet as a mouse, something stirred in the guinea grass. Issue's first thought



"In a flutter of terror she took the man's hand and crept on where he led her-the shouts of 'Kill! Kill!' rang in her ear each second."

out suddenly. She dropped her new friend's hand. It was a life and death crisis. Gwen, in her thin evening dress, gazed at her guest for a moment, hesitating. Love of life triumphed. She turned and fied, leaving Irene alone among the tropical jungle,

III

SAAC CARVALHO had joined the riotous mob at a moment of indecision and in a most half-hearted fashion. He had been drawn in by the whiripool. Unlike Genre, who really hated and dreaded the whites, Isaac had no particular ground of complaint against the dominant Buccra. He disliked the Colonel, to be sure, whose domineering ways had made him unpopular throughout all the valley; but against the whites as such he harbored as little grudge as it is possible for a black man to feel in an old slave colony. However, the momentary enthuslasm of revoit carried him forward with the others on the crest of its wave, and before he knew quite what he was doing he found himself rushing madly forward, with his cutiass in his hand, and joining aloud in the feerce chorus of "Burn, slay; it de Lard's will; kill, kill de Colone!"

He had joined them in the first wild act of incendiarism. From the blazing trash houses he rushed on with the others to the Colonel's house. On the front steps of the veranda he saw the Colonel waiting for themerect, soldlerly, a noticeable man, in his evening dress and broad front of white shirt, with his immaculate tie, facing death as storily as he would have faced it on the battle field. Isanc haif drew back at the sight of that one strong man, with his guests by his side, smiling at certain fate, and prepared for all emergencies. But Gearge, his eyes flashing and his white teeth clenched, leaped forward like a tiger and sprang upon his victim. Before the Colonel could fire Gearge's hand had wrested away his weapon, Gearge's cutlass had wounded him in the neek; red blood spurred forth; the Colonel rected, but still fought with his stick bravely. But it was one against many. In another minute or two the white shirt front was red with dabbled gore, the evening coat was in strips, the carefully trimmed mustache was one clotted mass, and the Colonel's body lay for dead on the veranda.

nel's body lay for dead on the veranda.
'Fire de house!" Gearge cried, with a ring of triumph in his voice.

was an iguana; then he knew it was a white woman.

Gazing down in the twilight, aided by the red glare from the burning house, he saw, crouching in the grass, a delicate young girl, in a dainty white muslin dress, who gazed up at him appealingly. Her eyes seemed

white muslin dress, who gazed up at him appealingly. Her eyes seemed to plead; her breath was held hard; she put one finger to her lips to bespeak his silence. Then, with a sudden silent movement, her hand slid into his own, and she drew him down to her gently.

At the unexpected touch of that confiding hand Issac Carvalho was

At the unexpected rouch of that confiding hand Isaac Carvalho was another man. Without moving from the spot or betraying the slightest emotion to his fellow hunters, he bent his head slightly, held one hand to his heart to still its beating, put his own finger to his lips in return, and whispered, in a voice so low as to be almost 'naudible, "All right, missy; don't you mobe or stir. Dis nigger understan'; gwine to take care ob you."

The touch of that hand had thrilled through and through him.

Irene looked up into his henest eyes and saw he meant it. In hot blood he would have killed a dozen white women and thought no more of it than you or I would think of so many mosquitoes. But the girl's confiding hand had taken his negro heart by storm, and he had no idea now save to project and preserve her.

now save to protect and preserve her.

The line moved on. Isaac, with a hurried glance to right and left, dragged behind a little, dropped gradually out, and then crept back to her slowly. He crept on all fours through the guinea grass, which cov-

her slowly. He crept on all fours through the guinea grass, which covered him in above, till he was close by Irone's side.

"Keep low, missy," he whispered. "Don't you show your head. If dem niggers see it, dem will hack you into bits same as dem hack de Colonel. Creep along here by my side. No, no, it don't no good to creep down toward de ribber, cause dem gwine to search it; and it don't no good to creep back to de house, 'cause too many ob dem guardiu' it. But you jest creep along sideways dis way toward my hut, an' if once we can get you in dere nobody aint gwine to hurt you."

Irene's heart was in her mouth; but, in a flutter of terror, she took the man's hand and crept on where he led. The sharp edges of the guinea grass cut her hands and knees till they bled; but she did not dare to stop short. The bue and cry of the insurgents was too close beside them; the shouts of "Kill! Kill!" rang in her car each second. They

crawled on, sideways, noiselessly, invisibly, through the deep, high grass, Isaac leading the way and putting aside the undergrowth in the stealthy negro manner with his bare arms, Irene following on and setting her hands and knees in his tracks quite biindly.

Creeping in silence so for many hundred yards they reached at last the edge of the grass piece, and, a close jungle of prickly bushes which to Irene looked impenetrable. Isaac surveyed it dublously.

"We got to get tro' dere," he said, at last, holding his head on one side. "It don't no udder way about it. If I take you round by de open, missy, dem gwine to find us an' kill us bote. Dem will say I harborin' de Lard's enemies."

harborin' de Lard's enemies."

"I can never push through that," Irene cried,

shrinking away from it.

"I know it, honey," the black man answered, looking round at her with consideration in his eyes.

"You don't strong enough to push tro', and de tharns gwine to tear your flesh. But I tink I can manage him." He turned to her suddenly. Then he selzed her all at once in his arms without a word, and, with a strange, monkeylike action began to run backward through the jungle, looking behind him as he ran, crushing the bushes with his back, but protecting her as far as possible from the thorns and spines with his own body.

He must have run several hundred yards, still stealthily and noiselessly, when he reached the open. In front stood a small thatched hut. Issac motioned her to be silent again, and carried her into

it like a baby.

He laid her gently on the bare mud ground of the hut and struck a sulphur match, with which he lighted a cheap petroleum lamp, such as one always finds in negro cottages. Irene could see that his arms and back were torn and bleeding.

"You have hurt yourself," she cried, drawing away.

Isaac looked down carelessly at the bleeding wounds. "Oh, dat ain't nuffin'," he answered in a cheery voice, though he was very much torn. "You done hurt yousself, missy?"

"Not-not very much," Irene whispered back, trembling. The whole position began to come home to her with a thrill of horror. She was alone and helpless in that black man's dwelling.

Isaac seated her gently on the ground, and then, from the recesses of the hut-peduced a calabash full of fresh cold water. With it he proceeded very reverently to wash the deep scratches on her neck, face and hands, drying them afterward on a tolerably clean square of red cotton handkerchief. The situation was curious. Under any other circumstances Irene would have found the stifling heat and close alr of the negro hut intolerable; she would have shrunk from the calabash and the red cotton handkerchief. Under the conditions in which she found herself, however, she was gind enough of the shelter into which she had crawled; gind of the cool water and the momentary respite from that breathless adventure. But her heart still beat flercely and her limbs trembled. For she was by no means sure even now of Isaac.

As for Isaac himself, half an hour before, in his alternative mod, he would have sprung upon Irene with the spring of a beast of prey, and cut her small white throat without one second's compunction. But that appealing hand had made all the difference. When Irene slid her delicate flugers into his, with the air of a suppliant, Isaac felt his whole nature turn back upon itself in a sudden revulsion; the innate chivalry which is dormant in every savage came out at once, and he had no thought now but to save this dainty, shrinking white woman. He recognized her as being of a higher type, and he became at once her devoted slave, ready to die in her service, as the Colonel had truly sald, with doglike fidelity.

WHAT could be do to show it? He brought the pillow from his bed and hid it on the ground for Irene to sit upon. The poor girl sat on it, dazed. He leaned down and tried to console or reassure her. Half an hour before it had been "de Lard's will" to massacre the whites, but now, he declared, with many asseverations, "Dem is only a set ob foolish, drunk niggers. De soldiers from Kingston gwine to come down tomorrow to shoot dem all; and den we gwine to take you back straight to your people."

Irene sat and shuddered. "My father is a soldier." she said, simply, "in command at Kingston," It was terrible to think of passing that night alone with this strange negro, in that close, dark but; but there was nothing else possible. As yet she hardly realized how nized it more fully, for he knew his own people "Looky here, Missy," he said, leaning down to her, with his white teeth showing. "It don't all ober yet, Before long dem nigger gwine to come here to ax fer ine. If dem find you here, dem gone kill you dead We muss blde you somehow. But it don't no good hidin' you outside de hut; dem search de open; you muss hide in here, honey. When dem come, you do like I tell you, an' don't ax no question. Meself will take care ob you. If dem gwine ter kill you, Missy, dem gwine ter kill you tro' dis nigger's body." Irene grarp d his hand in slient gratitude.

She sat there cowering for an hour in silence. All the time she could hear her own heart bent and feel her bosom fluttering. At the end of an hour or so, Isaac raised one warning finger and held his ear attentively. "Dem comin", Missy," he murmured, his quick ear de e ting the noise even faster than Irene's. "Dem comin', I tell you. Make haste and hide here."

As he spoke a distant cry fell on frene's car. "De serbant ob de Lard hab slain de tyrant. Hallelujah! Arise, kill all; let not one libbin' soul be left among dem!"

The cry drew nearer. It rose and fell hideously. Isaac meanwhile opened the mouth of the sack which Irene had seen him preparing before, and whispered to her low, "Creep into it!" Dazzled and maxed, Irene crept in, hardly aware what she was doing. Then her black friend laid a few cut ends of yam at the mouth, to look as if it were full, and rolled the sack and its contents with seeming carelessness near the door of the hut, yet very gently.

He had scarcely done so when Clemmy and Gearge, with their followers, burst in—a wild mob of murderers. They had lights in their hands, and were shrieking discordantly, for the Colonel's rum had added by this time to the fierce Maenad enthusiasm. "Where am de traitor?" they cried aloud. "Him dat run away from us? What for him run away? Him shelterin' de Lard's enemies. Search him house! Find dem out! Kill, slay dem!"

"I don't no traitor," Isanc said, standing out by the door of the hut, and giving the sack of yams (with Irene inside) a slight backward kick with his powerful bare foot, so that a few yams rolled out in the most innocent manner. Irene, holding her breath within, felt that he did it with extraordinary strength, yet perfect gentieness. "I don't harbor no enemy. I is de fren' ob de Lard; I lub de Lard's people." And at the moment of speaking he meant it seriously, for Irene was now to him the blessed fugitive.

"Search de house," Gearge cried, pushing him aside, and half inclined to hack him dewn. The women began to search it. Issue stood aside haughtily and then seated himself with great deliberation on the sack. Irene's breath came and went in short gasns; but she lay still as a mouse. The women searched everywhere except in the sack, which, with its protruding yams, looked too innocent for conceelment. It was so much the most sallent object in the hut, indeed, that they never thought of examining it. Issue sat and stared at them with stolid unconcern, At the end of their inquisition Gearge drew off frowning. "Stop here, Clemmy and Rose," he said, hosrsely. "Stop an' see dat aim don't get into no mischief wit' de Buccra."

(Continued on Page 31.)